

WORKERS WORLD

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50¢

Gov't giveaway plan

Trillions for Wall St., poverty for workers

By Fred Goldstein

There is nothing like the smell of a trillion-dollar bonanza to send the stock market through the roof. Wall Street has struck it rich with the Obama administration's blatantly pro-banker, pro-investor program to revive the capitalist economy.

The so-called Public-Private Investment Plan, crafted and presented by Secretary of the Treasury Timothy Geithner, intends to make a trillion dollars available to the biggest banks, hedge funds, private equity funds and other investors, supposedly to get the banks to lend money to businesses and consumers again.

The essence of the plan has two sides to it. First, bribe hedge funds, private equity funds and others in the shadow banking system who have been sitting on the sidelines with trillions of dollars—by offering them government money and loan guarantees to purchase bad bank assets. Second, bribe the banks to sell investors these bad loans by offering to pay far more than they are worth.

So the rich get a deal from the Treasury both ways.

The banks are holding onto \$2 trillion in bad loans resulting from their speculation on the great housing and real estate bubble. They don't want to sell these bad loans at anywhere near their vastly reduced worth because they would have to declare them as big losses. Up to now they have been refusing to sell and have been

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Bail Out the People

All Out to Wall St.

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Protests across U.S.

Why do Iraq, Afghanistan wars continue?

By Cheryl LaBash

Protests across the country on March 19 and 21 marked the sixth anniversary of the U.S. invasion and occupation of Iraq and Afghanistan in varied ways. Clearly the charge that "Occupation is a crime—from Iraq to Palestine" will not stop until the U.S. troops are withdrawn, regardless of the economic crisis or any change in the political administration of the U.S. government.

In **San Francisco** on Mar. 21, riot-gear police targeted young Palestinians, attacking, beating and arresting 10 people and reportedly injuring others among the several thousand protesting there.

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SAN DIEGO

WW PHOTO: GLORIA VERDIEU

Cindy Sheehan and Kofi check out a *Workers World* article, 'Which way forward for the anti-war movement?' Below, Atlanta.



ATLANTA

WW PHOTO: MONICA MOOREHEAD

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Tribute to Blues musician Willie King

Award-winning blues musician Willie King died March 8 at his home in the Old Memphis community of Pickens County, Ala, near the Mississippi line. Mr. King and his band, the Liberators, made six albums and a DVD since they started playing professionally. One won the Living Blues magazine “album of the year” in 2000.

King described his style of music as “struggle blues” because much of it was about the struggles against racism in the South. He played in a major concert the night before he died of a heart attack.

He played mainly in his hometown in Aliceville, Ala., and would travel professionally to the largest blues festivals in North America and Europe, but he was always willing to play at progressive events. I first saw him play in Birmingham, Ala., at a rally to support the women’s health clinic there after it was bombed.

Willie King will be sorely missed.

—Jimmy Raynor, Atlanta



This week ...

WORKERS WORLD
WW

Capitalism and patriarchy exposed in Elgin, Ill.

By Caleb T. Maupin

A recent court case has shed some light on this “great country” we live in and the way it treats women. The U.S. government and its propagandists are often foaming at the mouth denouncing Iran, Afghanistan and other nations for alleged “barbaric” treatment of women.

Of course they never mention the real conditions for women in the U.S., especially for working-class and oppressed women. Never mind that women make less money than men, that no equal rights amendment to the Constitution has ever been passed, or that physical and sexual violence is perpetrated on women every minute of every day.

A recent court case in Elgin, Ill., gives the lie to those who profess that women are “better off” in the U.S. than elsewhere in the world.

The Rev. Daryl Bujak, a former preacher at the First Missionary Baptist Church in Elgin, was recently convicted of a horrific crime for which he was only given a few hours of community service and a small fine.

A member of his congregation had a 12-year-old daughter who claimed she was being sexually molested and abused by her father nearly every day. However, her mother refused to believe her. So every week for several months, she took her daughter to Rev. Bujak for counseling. Instead of following federal laws requiring clergy to report sexual abuse, he decided to punish the girl.

Bujak also assumed she was lying and gave her a weekly beating with a wooden piece of crown molding, often leaving bruises on her. “Bujak would spank the girl 15 to 25 times, depending on how she had behaved the previous week.” (Chicago Tribune, March 19)

This continued for months. Finally the mother became convinced that the girl’s father, Matthew Resh, was indeed molesting the child, and he was charged with five counts of predatory criminal sexual assault, for which he is awaiting trial.

Low and behold, the girl had not been lying at all. She had been telling the truth, and she had bravely continued doing so despite the weekly beatings from her pastor.

So Rev. Bujak was put on trial for several crimes, in-

cluding not reporting sexual abuse. He was also charged with child abuse himself, for beating a 12-year-old girl on a weekly basis.

Bujak was found “not guilty” for failing to report sexual abuse. He was given a slap on the wrist of two counts of battery for the weekly beatings he administered. He will have to perform only 80 hours of community service and pay a fine of \$350, which is probably just a small fraction of the offering plate receipts in his church on any given Sunday. The only good part of the sentence is that Bujak is forbidden from ever again seeing the young woman he beat for telling the truth.

This is the “beautiful society” we live in, where a 12-year-old young woman who reports being sexually molested by her father is taken to a “preacher” at a “house of God” and then beaten every week until she is bruised, hoping to force her through violence to recant her story. The pastor is let off with a light sentence.

People go to jail for over a year sometimes for the crime of protesting the torture-training School of the Americas in Georgia and trespassing in the process.

A penalty of \$350 and 80 hours of community service, for what? For beating a 12-year-old every week in the hopes of getting her to shut her mouth and accept being molested and abused by her father.

The young woman’s name has been left out of the papers for good reason. But whoever she is, she is a hero. She knew that she was a human being who did not deserve to be molested. She knew that she had rights, and she refused to back down. Weekly beatings or not, she continued to challenge those oppressing her.

This young woman, only 12 years old, who stood up for her humanity against all this brutal oppression, is proof that revolution is possible in the United States. Human beings are capable of fighting back. Human beings are capable of resisting, even in the face of the most horrendous oppression.

My hero is not the judges, the cops, the courts, and all the others who let this battering pastor walk away with a slap on the wrist. My hero is this unnamed 12-year-old girl, who refused to surrender, despite the fact that all the hell of capitalism and patriarchy was coming down upon her.

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Black activists demand Obama address racism

The following statement was issued by members of the December 12th Movement, who held a press conference on March 21 in Harlem on the U.S. government's refusal to attend the United Nations World Conference against Racism-Durban Review in April.

As we mark this International Day for the Elimination of Racism, Black human rights activists across the country are holding simultaneous press conferences to protest President Barack Obama's threat to boycott the United Nations World Conference against Racism-Durban Review being held in Geneva, Switzerland, next month. U.S. State Department officials have demanded any reference to African slave reparations in U.N. official documents must be removed in order for them to participate.

The first World Conference against Racism met in Durban, South Africa, in September 2001 and its final Declaration "acknowledge(d) that slavery and the slave trade, including the transatlantic slave trade, were appalling tragedies in the history of humanity not only because of their abhorrent barbarism but also in terms of their magnitude, organized nature and especially their negation of the essence of the victims, and further acknowledge that slavery and the slave trade are a crime against humanity and should always have been so, especially the transatlantic slave trade."

This declaration that the transatlantic slave trade was a crime against humanity was a culmination of centuries of work and suffering by our people to establish that the attack on our humanity by European nations was a crime. A crime of such proportions that time cannot protect or shield



D12 member Atty. Roger Wareham speaks at March 21 press conference.

PHOTO: OMOWALE CLAY

its perpetrators from facing justice and its victims from obtaining reparations.

Now, eight years later, this April 20 through 24, at the United Nations in Geneva, Switzerland, the Durban II Review of the historic World Conference against Racism takes place. It is an international effort to review what progress has taken place and remains to be done to obtain justice, compensation and reconciliation for the victims of racism in general and the transatlantic slave trade

in particular.

Once again, even with the first Black President of the United States, Barack Obama, at the helm, the United States and its European allies are attempting to derail the process and reverse the "correct verdicts" of the 2001 World Conference.

Black human and civil rights activists are letting their voices be heard today [March 21] nationwide, including in Philadelphia, Houston, Chicago, Atlanta, Charleston, St. Louis, Memphis,

Washington D.C., Dayton, Kansas City and Fort Lauderdale.

We demand the full and unconditional participation of the United States in the conference. The U.S. was built on brutal racism and the exploitation of enslaved African peoples' labor. Systemic and institutional racism continues to this very day. We will continue to fight for justice for the crimes against humanity suffered by our people. They stole us, they sold us, they owe us! Reparations Now! □

Never forget Anthony Rosario and Hilton Vega

By Stephen Millies
New York

The City of New York threw in the towel and agreed to pay \$1.1 million to the families of Anthony Rosario and Hilton Vega. The two young Puerto Rican men were killed, shot 22 times—11 in the back—in the Bronx on Jan. 12, 1995, by police detectives Patrick Brosnan and James Crowe.

Both Brosnan and Crowe had been volunteer bodyguards for New York Mayor Rudolph Giuliani during his 1993 election campaign. Giuliani called the two white cops to congratulate them after the cousins Rosario and Vega were shot. The next year both these cops were able to retire on disability pensions.

For 14 years Rosario's mother, Margarita Rosario, has fought for justice. She founded Parents Against Police Brutality. Tony Rosario, his father, has also been in the frontlines against police killings.

Margarita Rosario and Tony Rosario's car was torched just hours after they spoke on WBAI radio on Jan. 7, 1999. Later that year when Margarita Rosario called Mayor Giuliani's radio show, Giuliani cut her off and attacked her as an inadequate mother.

Questions have been raised for years about the execution-style shootings of Rosario and Vega. The two cousins had accompanied their friend Freddie Bonilla to the apartment of Jorge Rodriguez and Hermilinda Rodriguez to collect a debt. Detectives Brosnan and Crowe were waiting for them, and ordered the three men to lie on the floor. The cops then proceeded to kill Rosario and Vega while wounding Bonilla. Then the cover-up began.

The Civilian Complaint Review Board



Margarita Rosario and Juanita Young

ruled that excessive force was used. New York Police Commissioner William Bratton, who is now the Los Angeles police chief, disregarded the CCRB's report. Shortly thereafter CCRB Executive Director Hector Soto resigned.

Shooting survivor Freddie Bonilla wasn't even called to testify before a grand jury, which narrowly voted not to indict the cops.

According to "Justifiable Homicide," a 2002 documentary, the apartment building's superintendent, who had witnessed the shootings, fled to Puerto Rico after being hounded by police.

Brosnan has a history of violence. On

Nov. 22, 1991, Brosnan was involved in the brutal beating of Black police officer Scott Thompson and Latino police officer Antonio Echevestre by a mob of drunken white cops, according to "The Black Shields" by Roger L. Abel.

Facing a hostile court

After 14 years, the families' civil lawsuit finally came to trial in Bronx Supreme Court on March 6. Inside the courtroom were many supporters, including parents whose children were killed by police.

Juanita Young, whose son Malcolm Ferguson was killed by police officer Louis Rivera on March 1, 2000, came to court. A jury awarded Young \$10 million last year. Her lawyer, Seth Harris, represented the families of Rosario and Vega.

Nicolas Heyward Sr. also came to the Bronx courtroom. His 13-year-old son Nicolas Heyward Jr. was killed in Brooklyn's Gowanus Houses on Sept. 22, 1994,

by housing cop Brian George. Heywood's family has since faced retribution. Three years ago his younger son Quentin was almost railroaded to prison on phony robbery charges before they were dismissed.

Inez Baez came to support the families of Vega and Rosario. On Dec. 22, 1994, Police Officer Francis Livoti strangled her son Anthony Baez to death.

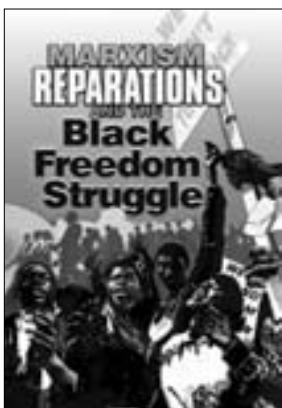
Supporters endured a hostile atmosphere inside the courtroom. Margarita Rosario described Judge Alan J. Saks as "very rude." Saks interrupted the questioning of police witnesses by Harris. Court cops tried to kick out supporters, including Gwen Debrow of the New York Free Mumia Abu-Jamal Coalition.

But the "City of New York"—that is, billionaire Mayor Michael Bloomberg's administration—still faced a Bronx jury made up entirely of oppressed people who could see through the cops' lies. This jury represented the real city of New York, overwhelmingly working class.

Bloomberg's house lawyers offered a "take it or leave it" settlement with the implied threat of endless appeals. Under these circumstances the families reluctantly agreed. Margarita Rosario told Workers World that Judge Saks wouldn't even look at her in his chambers until she asked him to.

New York City Law Department's Fay Leoussis claimed this \$1.1 million settlement was offered because of "uncertainties of litigation." So why didn't they offer it 14 years before?

As meager as it was, the only reason this settlement was offered was because of struggle. More struggle will be needed is get real justice for Anthony Rosario and Hilton Vega. □

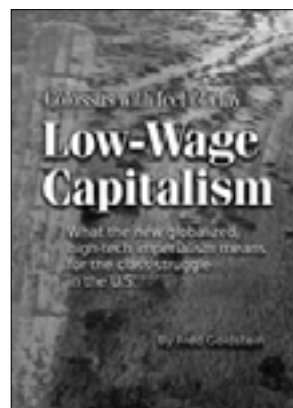


Meet Monica Moorehead, editor of **Marxism, Reparations & the Black Freedom Struggle**; articles from Workers World newspaper featuring Black Resistance, Katrina...

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You are invited to hear Fred Goldstein, author of **Low-Wage Capitalism**, talk about his groundbreaking new book and present a Marxist view of the capitalist crisis.

‘We’re in a state of emergency’

Los Angeles activists mobilize to stop foreclosures

By John Parker
Los Angeles

Although President Barack Obama has created mandatory and voluntary directives to mortgage lenders that they negotiate loan modifications with homeowners in default or foreclosure or in jeopardy of either, many have refused to do even what is minimally necessary to stop evicting renters and foreclosing on homeowners.

One company that fits this description is Aurora Loan Services, owned by Lehman Brothers Bank, Inc. This company, which itself may be auctioned off

by Lehman Brothers, at times will stall homeowners requesting a loan modification. And many times, according to the Labor/Community Coalition to Stop Foreclosures and Evictions, it flat out refuses to negotiate and threatens applicants with immediate auction dates and home evictions.

The coalition organized a Los Angeles news conference March 20 at the South Central home of Mauricio Alas, which Aurora threatened to auction off on April 3. The noontime media event was attended by many national and local broadcast media in addition to the Chinese news service Xinhua.

“How can it be that these financial institutions that caused this crisis in the first place and receive our tax dollars are allowed to ignore federal mandates to modify loans and refinance homes?” asked Gloria Saucedo of Hermandad Mexicana Transnacional, part of the Labor/Community Coalition, which offers free loan modification and counseling assistance to homeowners and residents.

Rosie Martinez, executive board member of Service Employees Local 721, stated her frustration with Aurora: “Many of our union members are facing the same problems with their home loans. This is a national crisis and we are in a state of emergency. Since these companies are getting away with ignoring federal guidelines, we need at least a two-year moratorium on all foreclosures, especially here in California where the unemployment rate has reached over 10 percent.”

In an unusual turn, the media reported the event very sympathetically toward the homeowners. They showed a tearful Alas holding his children and explaining how important this home is to him and his family and his willingness to work to keep

it despite Aurora’s behavior. In one of the broadcasts a reporter said the station tried to contact Aurora but the company refused to answer their calls. Visuals of the block where Alas lives showed homes boarded up due to foreclosure.

Alas may be upset about Aurora’s irresponsible behavior, but this is not deterring his will to fight, not only for his home, but for the homes of other renter and homeowner victims of this economic crisis.

Along with other families facing foreclosure, Rosie Martinez, Gloria Saucedo and Martha Rojas, who chaired the news conference, were also featured in the news coverage. “What are these people supposed to do—live in the streets?” asked Rojas, questioning Aurora to the cameras.

Some of the stations also publicized the national April 3-4 actions in New York targeting Wall Street and the April 3 “tent city” action planned at Bank of America in downtown Los Angeles.

Organizers said this was just the beginning of actions against Aurora. All of the families attending said they would get the word out and build a fight to stop the auctions and foreclosures. □

Workers, communities fight for health care



By Lou Paulsen
Chicago

The Illinois budget is in a shambles, both because of the recession and because lawmakers are never willing to tax the rich. Meanwhile, the city government’s priorities are entirely focused on attracting the 2016 Olympic games, which would mean a bonanza for whichever well-connected land speculators have managed to displace the residents from the parts of the South Side that would be developed for the events.

As a result, facility closings and cutbacks face the poor and working population exactly when thousands of people are losing their jobs, health insurance, and homes. Workers and communities are fighting back on a local basis. Inevitably, a citywide resistance will develop.

City health services have been cut back since Mayor Richard M. Daley took office in 1991. At one time there were 22 city mental health clinics. Now there are 12—and four of those are scheduled to close on April 7. Each serves about 500 patients and all are in communities of color on the South Side. The remaining clinics are already operating at capacity.

The neighborhood organization South Side Together Organizing for Power has called on the mayor to restore the \$1.2 million that was cut from the mental health budget. Activists have spoken up at town hall meetings and picketed at city offices. On March 19, they chanted, “Money for clinics, not the Olympics,” in front of the Department of Public Health office on South State Street.

Meanwhile, the University of Chicago Hospital pulled back from its plans to divert poor and uninsured people from its emergency room after the plan came under attack from medical school faculty and physicians. A letter from 200 residents and fellows protested the plan.

On the Near West Side, the University of Illinois Medical Center is threatening to close the 18th Street health center, which mostly treats immigrant women and children. The activist coalition United in Campaign against Budget Cuts held a speak-out on March 18 to organize against cutbacks and proposed tuition hikes. Workers and medical students called the Women’s Health Center one of the few culturally sensitive and affordable community health settings in the city.

Speakers also criticized cutbacks in enrollment of students of color and budget cuts for support services for Latina/o students. They brought up the fact that the number of maintenance workers per building has been nearly cut in half, to the point where many are suffering from fatigue and back pain.

On March 20, some 50 workers arrived at the UIC Medical Center at 7 a.m. wearing T-shirts reading “Quality for Patients, Not Quantity of Registrations.” This was to protest a near-doubling in the quota for workers processing insurance verifications. Managers told them to change their shirts or go home. University lawyers later conceded that this lockout was illegal, but the hospital still threatened to dock the workers for the time “wasted” by the illegal lockout. □

‘A powerful voice in struggle’

Cleveland activist remembered



By Sharon Danann
Cleveland

On Feb. 26, a funeral home in Cleveland’s African-American community was filled to standing room only for a service for Willie Frank Horton Sr. The space was also filled with the harmonies of the Mighty Men of Bethel Male Chorus, in which Horton had participated for decades.

Family members came forward to speak of Horton’s many kindnesses and his firm but quiet authority. “He was a giant,” was remarked several times.

A proclamation from the Carl Stokes Brigade was read, honoring their member and friend. The Carl Stokes Brigade is a grassroots organization named after Cleveland’s former mayor, who was the first African-American mayor of a major U.S. city. The proclamation stated:

“Whereas, Willie Horton has consistently demonstrated a genuine concern for civil and human rights and has fought valiantly on the battlefield against racism, poverty, economic, social and political injustice, and;

“Whereas, Willie Horton has been a powerful voice in the [B]lack struggle against police brutality and violence associated with those both in penal institutions and jails, having spoken vociferously against violence and abuse of [B]lacks and minority detainees, and;

“Whereas, Willie Horton, whose son Stephen lost his life while in custody, carried on the legacy of justice for his own son and others similarly situated, and;

“Whereas, Willie Horton was a freedom fighter and a gentle drum major in the struggle for peace, brotherhood and respect for all [humanity];

“Therefore be it resolved that Willie Horton is justly entitled to full honor and recognition as an outstanding citizen, father, husband, community leader and

now honored ancestor.”

As documented in “Stolen Lives: Killed by Law Enforcement,” the Hortons got a call from the police on Jan. 1, 1997, saying that Stephen had hanged himself while in custody after being arrested for disorderly conduct. The family knew their son was not depressed and found out that his belt and shoelaces had been taken away by the police prior to the alleged suicide.

They had to get a lawyer in order to see their son’s body at the morgue, and then they were only allowed to do so through glass. Stephen’s body was wrapped in gauze from his chin down, obscuring its condition. The police provided the Hortons with photos that they believed had been doctored.

Two years later, the Hortons had Stephen’s body exhumed and examined by an independent medical examiner. Seven body parts were missing, including the testicles and parts from around the throat. (Stolen Lives Project, 1999)

For many years after his son’s death, Horton was an active leader in October 22 rallies, as well as other demonstrations against police brutality, working with Black on Black Crime, Inc. (BBCI). When Art McKoy, the founder of BBCI, was in jail on trumped-up charges, Horton provided steady leadership to the organization.

He was also very involved with his union, United Auto Workers Local 45, while working at the Fisher Body plant for 38 years. He was appointed by the International union as the health and safety representative.

Abdul Qahhar, chair of the Cleveland chapter of the New Black Panther Party for Self-Defense, greeted Horton’s spouse Doris at the funeral. “I call her the First Lady. I gave her a red, black and green medallion because Mr. Horton was our wisdom and our light.” □

Canadian workers occupy auto parts plant

By Bryan G. Pfeifer

Inspiring workers internationally, about 80 Canadian Auto Workers from Local 195 in Windsor, Ontario, ended their 24-hour plant occupation at parts supplier Aradco on March 18.

The CAW members at Aradco in Windsor, a working-class city on the banks of the Detroit River, had defied a plant closing with no compensation including no severance pay by Aradco's parent company, Catalina Precision Products. Catalina halted production the week of March 8, when Chrysler severed its contracts with the corporation, which stamps parts for Chrysler.

"The workers here have decided to take over the plant. That's the only thing we have in order to try to get the monies that are owed to us," said Gerry Farnham, president of CAW Local 195, to the press March 18.

Catalina refused to pay the workers their

severance, vacation pay and other benefits. Almost all of Aradco's supplies are sold to Chrysler LLC, owned by the private-equity firm Cerebus Capital Management. The same is true for Aramco, another subsidiary of Catalina. Chrysler is now threatening to pull out of Canada if it doesn't receive massive wage concessions from the CAW and a bailout from the government.

Opposition grew on the shop floor when news of the plant closing spread. The result was an offer on March 16 by Chrysler of \$205,000 to be split among all the workers in the Aradco plant. The workers voted to reject the offer by Chrysler and proceeded to defy a court injunction to clear the plant.

The workers occupied the factory and welded the doors shut, demanding \$1.7 million (\$1.35 million U.S.) in total compensation. Word of the occupation spread quickly and the workers received widespread support throughout Canada and beyond.

Over 500 people rallied at the Aradco plant March 18, with the plant occupiers looking on from the roof. The rally included labor and community supporters as well as fellow CAW members from parts suppliers and production plants. They supported the occupation and prevented cops from storming the plant.

Due to the workers' occupation and the widespread support it received, after the rally the CAW negotiated an agreement "in principle" that is forcing Chrysler to pay \$400,000 (Canadian) to be divided among the workers.

But as part of the CAW-Chrysler agreement, the plant will be closed, and Chrysler is moving the tools and production equipment to another supplier. This had been prevented by the occupation and other worker actions, including the blocking of trucks at both the Aradco and Aramco plants.

Farnham said the \$400,000 only adds up to about eight weeks pay for the 80

workers at the Aradco plant. He said that Aradco/Catalina owes the workers an additional \$1.3 million in severance and other pay and the union is fighting for this.

This plant occupation is part of increasing direct actions by workers internationally, including the successful occupation by United Electrical workers at the Republic Windows and Doors plant in Chicago in December; the resistance to a jewelry-making plant closing in Rhode Island, which ended with arrests; the ongoing plant occupation at the Waterford Crystal plant in Ireland; and general strikes in France, Guadeloupe and Martinique, among others.

The anger at the bosses' ongoing brutal attacks against union workers is being fueled by the massive multi-trillion-dollar bailouts of the banks worldwide, which have sparked resistance from poor and working people. These actions will surely increase as the capitalist crisis continues. □

77th anniversary

The Ford Hunger March of 1932

By Martha Grevatt

March 7 was the 77th anniversary of one of the bloodiest chapters in Detroit labor history: the Ford Hunger March of 1932.

The stock market crashed in October of 1929. By 1930 millions were without work. Nowhere was the pain felt more deeply than in Detroit, where the auto industry's promise of prosperity had turned into its opposite. When the Trade Union Unity League, the Communist Party, the Young Communist League and the newly formed Unemployed Councils called a coast-to-coast demonstration on March 6, among the millions of participants were 100,000 at a rally in the Motor City. Detroit police broke up the protest, clubbing and arresting scores of participants.

Two years later the crisis had deepened; one statistic showed four Detroiters dying of hunger every day. Unemployment compensation did not exist. With two-thirds of his employees laid off, Henry Ford, then the richest man in the world, said the unemployed created their own misery by not working hard enough.

Detroit's network of Unemployed Councils had grown into one of the strongest in the country, saving untold numbers of families from a life on the streets. A city-wide meeting of the councils—there were more than 80 neighborhood-based chapters in metropolitan Detroit—decided to march on the Ford Motor Co.'s River Rouge complex in Dearborn, Mich.

The march, called by the Unemployed Councils and the United Auto Workers, had 14 demands: "Jobs for all laid off Ford workers; immediate payment of 50 per cent of full wages; seven-hour day without reduction in pay; slowing down of deadly speedup; two fifteen-minute rest periods; No discrimination against Negroes in jobs; relief [welfare], medical service; free medical aid in Ford hospital for employed and unemployed Ford workers and families; five tons of coal and coke for the winter; abolition of Service Men [Ford's hated private army of spies and thugs, led by the notorious Harry Bennett]; no foreclosures on homes of Ford workers; immediate payment of lump sum of fifty dollars for winter relief; full wages for part time workers; abolition of the graft system of hiring; and the right to organize." (Philip

Bonosky, Brother Bill McKee: "Building the Union at Ford")

The protest brought out thousands of workers. Beyond the immediate 14 demands, signs connected issues affecting workers around the world. They called for freedom for the Scottsboro Nine, a group of Black youths falsely accused of raping two white women. They said "hands off China," a reference to the sale of scrap iron to Japan, which used it in attacking the Chinese people.

The march began and proceeded without incident in Detroit. Dearborn, however, was Ford's personal fiefdom; his cousin Clyde Ford was the mayor. Marchers were attacked with tear gas at the city's border, but forced police to retreat with a barrage of stones and clumps of frozen mud. Police regrouped, only to have the scenario repeated.

At the entrance to Ford's complex, Dearborn police were reinforced by the Dearborn Fire Department, Detroit police, and Ford's own "Service Department." The firefighters turned their hoses on the unarmed marchers, while police fired a hail of bullets. Coleman (also spelled Kalman) Leny, Joe DiBlasio, and Joe York—the 19-year-old district leader of the YCL—were killed. Fifty more were wounded.

When Unemployed Council leader Alfred Goetz attempted to lead an orderly retreat, machine-gun fire, this time from Ford's own finest, began anew. The auto magnate's right-hand man, Harry Bennett, was immediately recognized and injured by stone-throwing workers. Bennett emptied his own gun and then a police officer's revolver into the workers. He and his goons killed 16-year-old YCL member Joe Bussel and left many more injured. Forty-eight workers, some in their hospital beds, were arrested.

More repression followed, with hundreds fired if they possessed left-wing literature or donated to the martyrs' funerals. Membership in the CP was cause for arrest.

At the funeral, Ben Bussel spoke loudly: "In the name of my murdered brother, I call upon you to organize and fight. Long live the workers of the world." As a band played the International—the lyrics "Arise, ye prisoners of starvation" particularly fitting—some 80,000 joined the

march to the cemetery.

In June a Black worker, Curtis Williams, died of wounds suffered during the march. Segregation policies kept him from being buried with his comrades; the funeral committee hired a plane and scattered his ashes over the cemetery—or by some accounts over the Rouge.

Attorney Maurice Sugar had written two months earlier that police brutality "grows out of the institution of private property under which one class in society lives in luxury at the expense of the great mass of workers who are compelled to live in a state of poverty, wretchedness, and despair." (Christopher H. Johnson, "Maurice Sugar, Law, Labor and the Left

in Detroit, 1912-1950") Although Sugar was able to convince the grand jury not to indict any of those arrested, no one was ever indicted for the Ford massacre.

In 1941, after years of sacrifice and struggle, the Auto Workers union finally won recognition from the Ford dynasty. In 1992 UAW Local 600 retirees bought five headstones—including one for Williams—and placed them by the four graves. On each is carved the words, "He gave his life for the union."

As workers begin again to fight evictions, foreclosures and the layoffs that cause them, the unyielding courage of the Ford hunger marchers is an inspiration. □



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Fear and loathing at AIG

Why bailouts are no answer to the crisis

By Joyce Chediac

The executives at the Washington office of American International Group are reportedly afraid to go to work for fear of their lives. In New York City, they are told not to wear their ID badges outside the building.

Recently, the Service Employees union organized demonstrations against AIG in 32 cities.

No wonder. AIG was the insurer for the greedy bankers who swindled the workers with deceptive subprime mortgages, and then sold them to other capitalists, gaining fees and high profits along the way.

It was like insuring a gambler at the crap table against loss. AIG did not have the collateral to back up its insurance. So when the bottom dropped out of the housing market, this megacompany, with offices on every continent, was on the brink of collapse.

The Bush administration bailed out this insurance giant three times with taxpayers' money, for a total of \$170 billion—even after AIG reported the greatest quarterly losses of any company ever.

Execs get juicy bonuses

People are furious that this bank has now used some of the bailout funds to give \$165 million in retention bonuses to the bankers at its Financial Products unit who almost brought the whole company down.

Adding fuel to the fire, the response of the Treasury Department and of President Barack Obama's chief economic advisor, Lawrence Summers, was that nothing could be done about the bonuses, that AIG's hands were tied by contracts it had signed with these executives.

Contracts? What about the auto workers? Bone-crushing pressure has been exerted on them to reopen their contracts. There has been no outcry from the government for the many violations of workers' contracts with the bosses.

Fearing mass anger, Democratic and Republican members of Congress are outdoing each other in opposing the AIG bonuses. One even urged the executives receiving bonuses to kill themselves. And on March 19 both parties in the House passed a bill that would tax the bonuses at a rate of 90 percent.

This is pure demagoguery, an attempt by Congress to cover itself. Business as usual for Congress depends heavily on lobbying gifts and campaign contributions from banks and corporations.

Christopher Dodd, a Democratic senator from Connecticut, is in the hot seat now. It seems he took out of the new round of bailout legislation language that would forbid banks which receive the money from using it as bonuses for their executives. As it turns out, Dodd received the largest contribution from AIG to his electoral campaign—\$100,000.

So that's whose interest he represents. These elected officials, even those who come across as liberals, really represent corporate interests, not the interests of the people, unless mass anger or a people's movement twists their arms.

What AIG did is business as usual for the banks. As infuriating and impolitic as its bonuses are, it is not unusual for CEOs to get huge bonuses, even when their companies do badly.

Bonuses and high salaries

A Wall Street Journal article on March 18, "Poor Year Doesn't Stop CEO Bonuses," cites five CEOs who recently

got bonuses ranging from \$1.1 million to \$4 million, even though the stock prices of their companies slid as much as 69 percent and the companies lost as much as \$2.9 billion.

While President Obama has a high profile in the efforts to manage the capitalist crisis, that's not who is running the show. Remember in September, when Secretary of the Treasury Henry Paulson and Vice President Dick Cheney marched George W. Bush out before the press corps to make a perfunctory statement on the Wall Street collapse? Bush spoke a few minutes and then Paulson took over.

It's the Federal Reserve System and the Treasury—whose high positions are filled by bank executives—who are running the show, whether their offices are in Washington or on Wall Street.

This is why just more government oversight and regulation will not work. In effect, the banks are regulating themselves. The fox is guarding the chicken coop.

Scott Polakoff, acting director of the Office of Thrift Supervision, admitted as much when he told the Senate Banking Committee that AIG and even AIG Financial Products did not slip through the regulatory cracks. "Various arms of government approved, enabled and encouraged AIG's disastrous bet on the U.S. housing market," he testified. (Wall Street Journal, March 17)

Wall Street to Washington, Washington to Wall Street—it's a revolving door. They were all in on the feeding frenzy of profit to be made from bad housing loans. They are all bankers and seek to restore the system so that the bankers can continue to profit as before.

The U.S. government used AIG as a conduit for money to prop up financial firms like Citigroup and Morgan Stanley. The purpose was to keep them afloat so they could continue to pursue the capital they had lost through a frenzy of speculative buying.

For five months, both AIG and Washington resisted telling who the bailout money was going to because "it might make investors uneasy about these institutions."

The lion's share of it went to domestic and foreign banks that were the trading partners of AIG Financial Products, the subsidiary whose exotic derivatives brought AIG to the edge.

Israeli soldiers testify to war crimes

By Michael Kramer

In testimony reminiscent of the Winter Soldier hearings that featured U.S. Iraq War veterans, Israeli Defense Forces soldiers who took part in "Operation Cast Lead" described their experiences and observations in February at the Oranim Academic College in Kiryat Tivon, where they had all attended a pre-military preparatory program as teenagers. The transcripts of the testimonies were released in mid-March.

On Dec. 27, the IDF had launched a devastating U.S.-funded air, ground and naval attack against the Palestinian population of Gaza. Six months of detailed planning preceded the attack. In 26 days, more than 1,400 Palestinians—mostly civilians, including 437 children under the age of 16—were killed, thousands more were wounded and tens of thousands were left homeless.

At the hearings, "Zvi" described the ex-

The banks' insurance claims were paid off in full, even though widespread defaults on the underlying debt did not occur.

The Wall Street Journal doesn't want the government regulating the banks. In typical fashion, it has focused its criticism on money going to bail out foreign banks. But the money of U.S. imperialists is spread out in banks all over the world. Ever hear of putting money in a Swiss bank? We can assume there was significant U.S. capital in all the bailed-out banks.

For example, UBS, the big Swiss bank, has been hiding money. It is being sued for not reporting big deposits made by U.S. individuals and firms for purposes of tax evasion.

Adam Glass, a partner in the firm Linklaters in New York, said that AIG money to European banks like UBS reflects how interrelated the global financial markets have become. "It is an interconnected world. If UBS or these French banks collapsed, it is not just their problem." (New York Times, March 17) And nobody knows how much these foreign banks may owe to U.S. investors.

The U.S. investment bank Goldman Sachs is getting favored treatment because it is heavily represented inside the government, but it must have weaknesses, too.

Now banks want more

The government and the bankers behind it say they will be able to bring the economy back by throwing huge amounts of taxpayers' money at the banks and by printing money to save the banking system. It is all speculation.

The head of AIG, Edward M. Liddy, says the insurance giant must pay out another \$1.6 trillion, essentially because the banks' speculative madness and orgy of profits gutted their own institutions and reduced the banking system to a house of cards waiting for the first wind to blow.

The Federal Reserve has announced it will inject another trillion of tax money into the financial system by buying Treasury bonds and mortgage securities. This will not make the bad loans and poor investments go away. And by printing more money to cover the bailout, the Federal Reserve raises the specter of hyperinflation, which will only increase the burden on the working class.

Our perspective

The capitalist government is seeking to bolster the very profit system that brought us to this disaster.

It is said in the media and by the financial pundits that sure, the bankers are arrogant and despicable, but they hold us hostage. If we don't help them be profitable we won't have any jobs.

That's their perspective. We don't share it.

We say no! We are not sympathetic to billionaires who don't want to become mere millionaires. We are not responsible for solving their problems. On the contrary, all the wealth they have they took from our labor.

They don't share the wealth. They have made huge profits in the last two decades. At the same time, income disparities increased and real wages sunk to the lowest point in 40 years. Close to 50 million people in the U.S. are without health care.

Every day they fire workers, break unions and then rehire some at lower pay with fewer benefits. They demand wage cuts and workdays without pay. Hundreds of thousands are being laid off each month, with no prospects for work.

And the cuts continue. Just here in New York, the public hospital system announced yesterday that it was cutting 400 jobs, closing children's mental health programs, pharmacies and community clinics that serve more than 11,000 people. More cuts are expected in a few months.

We have a different solution. They've done enough damage. To hell with their profits.

We demand jobs. We demand that the trillions of our dollars in the Treasury be used to put us to work at decent wages rebuilding the civilian infrastructure, staffing the hospitals and community clinics, reducing class size in the schools and so on.

The mass anger at AIG over the bonuses shows that our class is waking up after a long sleep. We want to help the workers feel their own strength. The workers don't need the bankers and the bosses. We're better off without them.

Together, united, we have the power to fight for and win what we need.

This article is abridged from a speech by Chediac given March 20 at a meeting of the New York branch of Workers World Party.



ecution of a Palestinian elder: "You see a person on a road, walking along a path. He doesn't have to be with a weapon, you don't have to identify him with anything and you can just shoot him. With us it was an old woman, on whom I didn't see any weapon." (Haaretz, March 19)

"Ram" recounted how a Palestinian mother and her two children were forced out of their home and told to go to the right. When they got confused and went to the left, they were all shot dead.

Other Israeli soldiers described the intentional destruction of homes, furniture and personal property and how the atroc-

ities resulted from the tone set by their military command structure.

The testimonies are further evidence that the atrocities committed against the Palestinian people in Gaza during Operation Cast Lead must be labeled war crimes and that the criminals who planned and commanded this operation must be prosecuted as war criminals.

These war criminals include Prime Minister Ehud Olmert, Defense Minister Ehud Barak, Foreign Minister Tzipi Livni and military command personnel like Gabi Ashkenazi, Yoav Galant, Amos Yadlin, Hartzvi Halevi, Yoav Mordechai and Yigal Slovik.

Middle-grade and high-ranking IDF officers are regularly rewarded with all-expenses-paid scholarships to U.S. universities for graduate study. Students and faculty should be on the lookout for the above mentioned and other IDF war criminals. If identified they should be socially isolated and the school administration should be challenged about their presence on campus.

Gov’t giveaway plan

Trillions for Wall St., poverty for workers

Continued from page 1

holding out for more.

Meanwhile, hedge funds, private equity funds and other investors are holding onto trillions of dollars, which they keep in government bonds and other secure investments. They don’t want to lend this money to help workers or businesses or anybody. These moneybags are sitting on the sidelines, looking for mergers or buy-outs, while clipping the interest coupons.

Geithner, Lawrence Summers—Obama’s chief economic adviser—and company came up with a brilliant modification of the plan to buy so-called “toxic assets” crafted by former Treasury Secretary Henry Paulson during the Bush administration.

Here is an illustration of one part of Geithner’s plan. “It works like this, according to the Treasury Department fact sheet: Imagine that a bank wants to sell mortgage loans with a \$100 million face value. The FDIC [Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation] would auction the loans to private bidders. Suppose the winning bidder offered \$84 million. The private investor would put up \$6 million, Treasury would put up \$6 million, and the FDIC would guarantee \$72 million worth of loans.” (Washington Post, March 23)

No matter if things go well or bad—in other words, whether the assets can be sold at close to \$84 million or if they completely fail and not a penny can be collected—the bank still gets its \$84 million. If things go well, the investors make a killing on a \$6 million investment. If things go bad, the government gets stuck with the loan to pay off, while the investors walk away with a minimum loss (which they will write off their taxes). In addition, the private fund managers get to retain control over the investment.

There is another type of deal in the plan in which the government matches the private investors dollar-for-dollar and also provides loans to go with it. This is for the bad mortgage-backed securities.

Make a trillion dollars subject to these giveaway terms and it is guaranteed to send the stock market through the roof—at least for a moment.

Giveaway vs. ‘nationalize’

There are so many problematical issues involved with this plan that its prospect for success, even on the terms projected

in Gaza

The steadfast and heroic Palestinian resistance to Zionist occupation now spans six decades. The resistance has resulted in one crisis after another in a Zionist movement that always had numerous contending and contentious factions (social democratic, fascist and religious, to name a few). Today the Zionist movement is more fractured than ever before. Weeks after a national election it still cannot form a coalition government to administer the so-called State of Israel.

Its armed wing, the IDF, is also feeling the stress and strain from a resistance to occupation it cannot defeat. This is resulting in growing numbers of youth refusing conscription and reservists refusing call-ups and deployments. In addition, there is a growing divide in the IDF between outright racist religious fundamentalists and those with a more secular outlook.

Michael Kramer served in the IDF from 1972-1975. He is a member of Veterans For Peace, Chapter 021.

by Geithner and his allies, seems highly doubtful to more cautious sections of the ruling class.

The giveaway plan represents a victory of the Geithner/Larry Summers faction over the “nationalization” current in the ruling class establishment. In this sense it represents a victory of the faction closest to the big banks on Wall Street that are in the deepest trouble.

The nationalization current, more properly described as those for receivership, is not so closely tied to the direct interests of these banks and has a broader view of the needs of their class and the financial system in this present crisis. Their views are sharply opposed to the Geithner/Summers adventure.

This current wants to stop pouring money indiscriminately into banks that are already insolvent, change the management, force them to declare losses, restructure them, take a stake in the banks and then hand them back to private owners and collect dividends. This view was recently propounded by Thomas M. Hoenig, president of the Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City, in a paper entitled “Too Big Has Failed.” It is easy to see how unpalatable such a view would be to Citigroup and other large banks.

It is the normal function of the capitalist state and the bourgeois political parties to protect the interests of the capitalist class as a whole and their system. This is the way the state has conducted itself, by and large, during previous lesser crises: the Latin American debt crisis, which endangered the U.S. banking system during the Reagan administration; the savings and loan crisis of the late 1980s and early 1990s; and the 1995 Mexican bailout crisis, when U.S. investors were threatened by the collapse of the Mexican peso.

A ruling class consensus was arrived at on each occasion and the Treasury Department and Federal Reserve System took the necessary measures to deal with the situation and avert a collapse.

Crisis has deep roots

But the magnitude of this global crisis is so vast, and the power of the banks involved, the extraordinary deterioration of their financial conditions, and their desperation to save themselves at all costs is so great, that the Obama administration has been dragged into a most questionable scheme.

The administration has become entrapped by the narrow interests of Goldman Sachs, Citigroup, AIG, Merrill Lynch and their ilk to the point of throwing trillions of dollars at them to keep these specific banks afloat, at the expense of using these funds to bolster the system as a whole.

This could have dire political consequences in the long run for President Barack Obama himself.

Not that any amount of funding could significantly turn this capitalist crisis around in the long run. It is fundamentally caused by a global crisis of capitalist overproduction, which has been aggravated and intensified by the financial crisis.

The present crisis is profound. It represents the end of a 70-year era of upward development of the productive forces by U.S. and world capitalism that was propelled by military spending, imperialist globalization, destruction of the standard of living of the workers of the world, technological attacks on jobs, devastation of the environment, plus massive credit and indebtedness. These forces have run their course and no bailout or stimulus pack-

The sanctity of capitalist profits is what is at the bottom of bailouts, layoffs & foreclosures. It is time to say no to capitalism.

age can change these fundamentals.

But a trillion dollars is a lot of money. It could fund measures to ameliorate the crisis to some extent if strategically placed—particularly if it were given directly to the masses, either as wages for a jobs program or as direct assistance or to cancel the mortgages of the millions facing foreclosure and to restore the foreclosed families to their homes.

What workers won in the 1930s

One need go back to the administration of Franklin D. Roosevelt to get a sense of the kind of temporary relief for the workers that could be administered—even though Roosevelt was never able to solve the crisis of capitalist overproduction, except through war.

Economist James Galbraith in a Washington Monthly article of March 9, “No Return to Normal,” cites one study showing that the Roosevelt government “hired about 60 percent of the unemployed in public works and conservation projects that planted a billion trees, saved the whooping crane, modernized rural America, and built such diverse projects as the Cathedral of Learning in Pittsburgh, the Montana state capitol, much of the Chicago lakefront, New York’s Lincoln Tunnel and Triborough Bridge complex, the Tennessee Valley Authority and the aircraft carriers Enterprise and Yorktown. It also built or renovated 2,500 hospitals, 45,000 schools, 13,000 parks and playgrounds, 7,800 bridges, 700,000 miles of roads, and a thousand airfields. And it employed 50,000 teachers, rebuilt the country’s entire rural school system, and hired 3,000 writers, musicians, sculptors and painters, including Willem de Kooning and Jackson Pollock.”

No faction of any significance in the ruling class is debating this question for now because the class struggle is dormant and the masses have not yet risen up against their conditions as they did during the Great Depression. But that is because the crisis is only in its early stages. Roosevelt is known for his concessions to the workers because the workers won those concessions by mass struggle. Obama has no such situation right now and is hewing to a generally conservative line of approach. This could change.

In addition, the issue of the AIG bonuses has sharpened the political situation. Fearing the masses and because their own connections to the big banks are coming out, the Democratic Party politicians in the House of Representatives became hysterical in their denunciations of the bonuses to AIG executives, as did a significant number of Republicans. They all engaged in a public attack on corporate bosses and, by implication, on their own paymasters.

The situation may be quieted somewhat now that some of the executives are returning the bonuses. But this political outburst showed that the right-wing forces are straining at the bit to become champions of the “little people” and supposed adversaries of the “greedy bankers” as a way of getting at the Obama administration. They hope crisis will create an opening for a right-wing, racist revival. The working class must be on the alert for

this and not be sucked in by any of this demagoguery.

‘A dangerous year’

The entire government plan is predicated on a revival of the capitalist economy and the housing market. This is what will presumably make the bad assets go up in value, when people start buying houses again and bidding up the prices. In fact, an announcement that first-time housing sales went up helped fuel a buying frenzy on Wall Street.

But the Wall Street Journal of March 23 wrote about the rise in home sales that “nearly half of the sales occurred in the foreclosure/vulture market. So, home sales are up, but it’s heavily dominated by bottom fishing.”

More important was a statement by the head of the World Bank, Robert Zoellick, that 2009 would be a “dangerous year.” He said on March 21 that the global economy would shrink by 1 to 2 percent during the year: “We haven’t seen a figure like that globally since the end of World War II, which really means the Great Depression.” In addition the World Bank was projecting that global trade was set to slide the most in 80 years, a decline in exports of 2.1 percent, not seen since 1982. The European economy will shrink by 3.2 percent (raised from an earlier forecast of 2 percent). Japan’s economy is projected to shrink by 5.8 percent and the U.S. economy by 2.6 percent.

Of course these projections are always subject to correction, but they have been consistently revised in a negative direction. They are confirmed by a report about global manufacturing. In Europe industrial production is down 12 percent from a year ago. In Brazil it is down 15 percent, in Taiwan a staggering 43 percent. Manufacturing fell in India for the first time in years. China’s manufacturing is down by 25 percent.

The three largest imperialist economic blocs—Europe, Japan and the U.S.—are all predicted to shrink their economies. And three of the most populous countries in the world, representing two-fifths of the world’s population, are showing a decline in industrial output.

It is clear that, despite the momentary euphoria of the profiteers on Wall Street, this crisis is not about to be solved. Even if the banks were to start lending again, the population is in ruins. No one is credit worthy because they are in debt, losing their jobs, paying medical bills, paying student loans, paying their credit card loans and/or are behind in their mortgages.

The idea that it is necessary to give these banks trillions in order to solve the crisis is either a grand illusion or outright fraud. The bailout is calculated first and foremost to save the banks while the masses sink deeper into the real crisis—the crisis of unemployment, homelessness and poverty.

The only solution is a mass mobilization to fight back against the capitalist system that is robbing people of their incomes, their homes and their very lives. The sanctity of capitalist profits is what is at the bottom of bailouts, layoffs and foreclosures. It is time to say no to capitalism. □

From Abu-Jamal on death row

'Against the war! Against empire!'

From a March 15 speech played at protest rallies marking the sixth anniversary of the U.S. war on Iraq.

Ona Move! Long Live John Africa!

Dear brothas and sistas against empire,
I greet you all from America's death row or what some have called Guantánamo North.

As you gather today against the carnage and hell brought to both Afghanistan and Iraq, know that the rumblings and warnings of dissent, of the voices of millions back in spring 2003, have come true.

Many people said the war would wreak destruction, not just abroad, but here at home, as the economy would crumble.

It's now 2009. Look around you and you can almost see things falling. This is but the latest crisis of capitalism. The stock market is a jack 'n the box, and I needn't even mention the foreclosure crisis. It's but the latest bubble to burst. And joblessness!

But as bad as things are here, they pale in comparison to the hell lived by millions under U.S. occupation in Iraq and Afghanistan. Why should anyone be surprised that the most popular man in Iraq is Muntadhar al-Zeidi, the journalist who launched a pair of size 10s at the American president [Bush], and not the U.S. puppet installed as prime minister?

In Afghanistan, the so-called president is little more than "the mayor of Kabul," and also the head of the biggest heroin ring on earth.

Isn't it time to say goodbye to empire? I thank you for your kind invitation! Down with all imperial wars! □

Youth commentary on D.C. protest:

'Stage a people's coup!'

By Madeline Miller

The following excerpted commentary is by a member of the Raleigh chapter of the youth group FIST—Fight Imperialism, Stand Together. Visit www.fistyouth.org.



On March 21, Raleigh FIST traveled to the march in D.C. Eight of us went, driving in a 1980s family van.

The march itself was interesting, long and fairly diverse, with socialists and young anarchists. The riot police were out in full force, equipped with dogs, shields, wooden sticks and teargas guns. No violence or major confrontations occurred between the government and protestors, so perhaps

this was just another half-hearted or otherwise restrained force. The march was three miles long and so perseverance was felt as each person dedicated themselves to finish the march, shouting as much as possible for about four consecutive hours.

At one point, in front of war-profiteering offices, the march halted to shout and dance, but was quickly moved forward because we were "clogging the area" and other obscure reasons. Thinking back on it, we definitely should have stayed and let the fury grow. But this is also the perspective of someone who yearns for the kind of fervor and dissent

felt during the almighty "civil rights era." Are these not civil rights that we are fighting for? Nostalgia is surely not as far as we can go. We have the power to make this imperialist, capitalist, racist, sexist, anti-LGBT and classist government turn over.

This march was successful in my eyes because it succeeded in inspiring me towards staging a people's coup. Let us bring buses from all cities of all people to incite trembling in the CEOs that look down upon the thousands and thousands from their offices. Let them cover their ears because the noise is so loud. The fact that this march alone could have set off this excitement should invigorate people: the anti-war movement is not dead, so let us continue to make it stronger!

The president may represent a nurturing and revisionist administration, but it is still obvious to millions that the war in Afghanistan is continuing, Iraq is going into its most threatening stage yet—the long-term phase—and the racist war in Palestine is atrocious.

We can make this movement stronger—if electoral politics got out the vote, then we can spread radical epiphany and can get out the people. We can look all over the world for answers and see how the most radical resisters to U.S. imperialism organize in South America, Central America, Asia, the Middle East, Africa—everywhere! Mobilize! □



WW PHOTO: MONICA MOOREHEAD

Protests across U.S.

Why do Iraq, Afghanistan wars continue?

Continued from page 1

The San Francisco Chronicle reported: "Much of the protest focused on the economic crisis. ... Judy Greenspan, a third-grade teacher in Richmond who recently received a pink slip, led the crowd at Justin Herman Plaza in a chant, 'Jail the rich, bail out the poor, stop the foreclosures, stop the war.'" Greenspan, who spoke for Workers World Party, yelled: "It's all connected! It is time for us to take power in this country!" (March 21)

On March 19, the sixth anniversary of the war against Iraq, hundreds of San Francisco Bay Area activists protested in several locations and at different times. Some were arrested during a civil disobedience "die-in," blocking trolley rails in the heart of the financial district in San Francisco. Others marched in front of the U.S. military recruiting office in **Berkeley, Calif.** And Iraq Veterans Against the War stopped traffic near the U.N. Plaza in San Francisco.

Also on March 19, organized labor protested the economic crisis, directly related to the wars against Iraq and Afghanistan, in a national "Day of Action Against Corporate Excess." In San Francisco more than 100 demonstrators in front of local offices of big financial institutions stated, "Banks get bailed out! People get sold out!" Organized by the Service Employees International Union and many other labor and community organizations, union workers and supporters first protested in front of Wells Fargo Bank chanting: "Wells Fargo, you can't hide! We can see your greedy side!" Then the group marched a block away to the Bank of America Building, which houses,

in addition to Bank of America, the local office of the American Insurance Group, the focus of rage against big-shot, million-dollar bonuses of U.S. taxpayers' dollars. They marched in a huge circle on the spacious patio, chanting: "Hey big banks! Where's OUR dough? Working families have a right to know!" Upon leaving both locations the demonstrators all promised, "We'll be back!"

On March 21 in **Los Angeles** 2,000 protesters—including Ron Kovic, paralyzed Vietnam veteran and author of "Born on the Fourth of July"—gathered at Hollywood and Vine, and then carried many U.S.-imperialist-flag-draped coffins, signifying the deaths of soldiers, to the euphemistically named "Armed Forces Career Center." Cindy Sheehan spoke in Los Angeles and also in **San Diego**, where 300 activists marched to the War Memorial in Balboa Park.

In **Washington, D.C.**, on March 21 about 10,000 protesters marched three miles from the Washington Mall to the Pentagon. The march culminated in front of the cluster of war profiteering corporations whose offices are located near the Pentagon: Boeing, Lockheed Martin, General Dynamics and KBR. Demonstrators labeled them "merchants of death."

A contingent of Iraq and Afghanistan war veterans led the predominantly young crowd. There was also representation from Arab and Muslim communities.

The Arlington County Police mobilized in full riot gear in an attempt to block the demonstrators from delivering symbolic coffins at the doorsteps of the war corporations. Major organizers of the

March 21 Washington, D.C., Los Angeles and San Francisco demonstrations were the ANSWER Coalition; the National Assembly to end Iraq and Afghanistan Wars and Occupations, which demanded "Fund Jobs and Human Needs, Not Wars, Banks and Billionaires" on their signs; and chapters of Iraq Veterans Against the War.

After the rally, organizers with the New York chapter of the Bail Out the People Movement moved on to Baltimore to organize for a march on Wall Street on the anniversary of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s assassination, April 3 and 4.

The Georgia Peace and Justice Coalition organized a spirited anti-war march on March 19 that spontaneously took to the streets in downtown **Atlanta** and ended in front of the CNN building. The march was led by veterans from the Vietnam War and the Iraq War. At CNN, effigies of former U.S. President George W. Bush along with pictures of former Vice-President Dick Cheney and former Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld were placed on two trash cans. While chanting the words of the heroic Iraqi journalist, Muntadhar al-Zeidi, who threw his shoe in protest at Bush in Iraq last year—"This is from the widows, the orphans and those killed in Iraq!"—the participants threw shoes at the effigies and photos of the three war criminals. Al-Zeidi was recently sentenced to a three-year prison sentence for his defiant action.

Buffalo, N.Y.'s Peace, Justice and Anti-War Coalition participated in March 21 national actions by holding a noisy, seven-mile-long caravan of about 30 cars through much of the city.

Downtown **Detroit** was the scene of an anti-war action organized by the Michigan Emergency Committee Against War and Injustice. Activists gathered at the "Spirit of Detroit" statue and marched behind a banner demanding, "Rebuild our cities! Don't destroy Iraq's! Money for Schools, Health Care, Housing and Jobs—Not War!" to rally at Central United Methodist Church.

The rally chair, Pan-African News Wire editor Abayomi Azikiwe, called for the withdrawal of U.S. forces from Iraq and Afghanistan and expressed solidarity with the people of Palestine, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, the African continent, Latin America and the Caribbean. Representatives of Students for Justice in Palestine and the religious and community-based organizations present focused on uniting for upcoming struggles like the movement for boycott, sanctions and divestment from Israel; the struggle to end foreclosures and evictions; the May 1 march for immigrant and workers rights; and the Peoples Summit countering the National Economic Summit in Detroit, June 15 through 17. **Ann Arbor** and **Flushing, Mich.**, both had anti-war gatherings.

The International Action Center and Troops Out Now Coalition affiliates participated in, organized for or initiated these reported actions.

Contributors to this report include Abayomi Azikiwe, Ellie Dorritie, Judy Greenspan, Dee Knight, Joan Marquardt, Dianne Mathiowetz, Monica Moorehead, John Parker and Gloria Verdieu.

Anti-NATO forces in Serbia mark 10th year since bombing of Yugoslavia

By Heather Cottin
Belgrade, Serbia

March 23—Hundreds of representatives are meeting in Belgrade on March 23-24 to commemorate the 10th anniversary of the U.S.-led 78-day bombing of Yugoslavia and the heroic resistance of its people and military during NATO's aggressive and illegal war. Participants came from many European countries, including Bulgaria, Belgium, Russia, Germany, Greece, Italy, Ireland, Britain, Spain, Portugal and Serbia, as well as Palestine, Angola, Brazil, Venezuela and the United States.

In 1999, thousands of courageous students rallied at huge rock concerts on bridges the U.S. and its NATO allies were bombing in Belgrade. Wearing shirts emblazoned with bull's-eyes, they protested the criminal NATO violation of Yugoslavia's sovereignty, proclaiming themselves "NATO targets."

The Belgrade Forum met to "remember the defense of the county" that coincided with NATO's first step of Western military expansion into the former socialist coun-

tries. The U.S.-led NATO assault killed over 2,000 civilians and bombed chemical and water treatment plants, resulting in permanent destruction of the country's ecology. The Pentagon used bombs and shells with depleted uranium in Kosovo and the rest of Serbia 10 years ago. Now cancer rates there have skyrocketed to over 300 percent above prior rates.

Speakers at the two-day conference said the U.S.-NATO war—allegedly to "liberate" Kosovo—was designed to build Camp Bondsteel, now the largest U.S. military base in southeastern Europe. The U.S.-NATO plan was to transform the Balkans into a launching pad for further military expansion into Eastern Europe and Southwest Asia, which has happened.

Ivan Dimitrov from Bulgaria, one of the speakers at the Belgrade Forum, apologized to Serbs for his nation's role as the military base from which the U.S. launched many of the aerial attacks during the 78-day war on Yugoslavia. Belgrade, he said, is unique, a city that was bombed by both the Nazis and by NATO. He continued, "The capitalist system is the focus

of all the evil in the world."

In the Yugoslavia of 1989, some 20 million people of many nationalities lived in six republics. Some 70 percent of the country's productive capacity was publicly owned.

Since Yugoslavia's breakup, everything has been privatized. The factories are closing. The fancy Benetton, Gap, Ann Taylor and computer stores have few customers. Unemployment is in double digits. In Kosovo, a former province of Serbia that NATO has turned into an abject colony, unemployment is 70 percent.

Protests of NATO 'celebration' planned

Most speakers at the Belgrade Forum condemned the world capitalist press for suppressing the truth about what NATO began in Yugoslavia, but noted that this spring marked a new beginning for a worldwide fightback against NATO militarism and the putrefying capitalist system it protects.

The most pro-capitalist, rightist and subservient politicians in Georgia, Ukraine, Azerbaijan, Poland, Bulgaria and other "new" NATO member-states

came into office after establishing their loyalty to the West and to neoliberal policies supporting "globalization." That is, they backed U.S. and European Union imperialist investment and control, turning their countries into Western colonies to defend their own narrow interests.

The workers in Eastern Europe, robbed of free health care, education, the guarantee of jobs and culture, face double-digit unemployment.

Now the U.S. and NATO look to the working-class and farmer youth of Eastern Europe's "new" NATO members for cannon fodder for its colonial adventures. These youths' job is to kill and die for NATO in Afghanistan, while NATO military expenditures strain the budgets of these poorer member nations.

The 60th anniversary of NATO in early April has become the focus of protest all over Europe and also in Canada, beginning now. In Montreal, Rome, Brussels and Belgrade people are gathering to say no to NATO expansion, with major protests planned for April 2-4 in and around Strasbourg, France. □

Global meltdown: China, India on separate paths

By David Hoskins

The International Monetary Fund has revised its 2009 forecast to project the first global economic contraction in 60 years. The revised IMF figures estimate the world economy will shrink by as much as a full percentage point this year. Advanced economies alone are set to decline by more than 3 percent. The deep recession in developed countries is expected to continue throughout the year despite the enormous sums that have been spent on fiscal stimulus efforts.

The IMF was predicting just this January that the global economy would grow by 0.5 percent. The sharp revision reflects the speed with which the meltdown has caught capitalist economists by surprise. The IMF is a champion of imperialist globalization. It is quite possible that the estimates of a 1 percent decline continue to understate the severity of the crisis.

While developing economies are projected to experience continued growth for 2009, their growth rates have been impacted by the global recession. The World Bank recently cut its 2009 projections for China's economic growth from 7.5 percent to 6.5 percent. Most economists have also significantly cut expected growth rates for India.

The Economist Intelligence Unit has estimated that China and India are two of just four Asian countries expected to expand in 2009. Japan's economy, by contrast, is expected to decline by as much as 5.8 percent.

Different paths in good times and bad

An article by Somini Sengupta, titled "As Indian Growth Soars, Child Hunger Persists," recently examined the divergent results economic growth has had in India and China. (New York Times, March 13) Even after a decade of spectacular economic growth, Indian child malnutrition rates are worse than in many sub-Saha-

ran African countries. Indicators such as these begin to paint a picture of growth in India that is strikingly different than that of neighboring China.

More than 42 percent of Indian children under five suffer from malnutrition, as measured by their weight. India is a low-income country where 80 percent of its population struggles to survive on less than \$2 a day. Thirty-nine percent of the population cannot read or write and India's infant mortality rate rests at 32 deaths per 1,000 live births.

In China just 7 percent of its children younger than five are underweight. The proportion of its population surviving on less than \$2 a day has been cut to 35 percent. The country has almost achieved universal literacy. Its infant mortality rate is 21 deaths per 1,000 live births.

What accounts for this difference in popular welfare in two of Asia's emerging powerhouse economies?

Conditions reflect history

China and India share a lot in common. The two countries have a long history, are separated by a common border, and have populations that exceed one billion.

The countries have different political histories, however, and their current political leadership and method of economic

organization are fundamentally different. The New York Times hints at this, even as it peppers its examination of China with the usual allegations and innuendo that the U.S. media reserves for left-wing and anti-imperialist governments of any type.

China has been more successful in reducing child poverty and hunger because of the efficiency of its centralized state and the firm leadership of the Communist Party of China. The leadership of the CPC has allowed China to utilize the socialist features of the Chinese state to lift children up, even after three decades of risky experimentation with market reforms.

The power of the CPC is rooted in the People's War of Liberation led by the party and its Red Army. The CPC took power after first driving out the Japanese occupation forces and then decisively defeating the U.S.-allied armies of Chiang Kai-shek.

CPC Chairman Mao Tse-tung declared at the founding of the People's Republic of China in 1949 that "the Chinese people, comprising one quarter of humanity, have now stood up." China put the humiliation of colonialism behind it as it embarked on an independent path of workers' power. China's revolutionary history is evident today as it strides against the poverty and suffering of its past.

Low-Wage Capitalism

A timely new book by Fred Goldstein describes in sweeping detail the drastic effect on the working class of new technology and the restructuring of global capitalism in the post-Soviet era. It uses Karl Marx's law of wages and other findings to show that these developments are not only continuing to drive down wages but are creating the material basis for future social upheaval.

The analysis rests on three basic developments in the last three decades:

- The world's workforce available to exploitation by transnational capitalist corporations doubled in the wake of the collapse of the USSR and Eastern Europe.
- The technological revolutions of the digital age, in both production and communications, have allowed transnational corporations to destroy high-wage jobs and simultaneously expand the global workforce to generate a worldwide wage competition.
- The decline in the economic condition of the workers, driven by the laws of capitalism and the capitalist class, is leading to the end of working-class compromise and retreat and must end up in a profound revival of the struggle against capital.

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At the present moment the capitalist financial authorities are trying desperately to control an uncontrollable system — capitalism...

The unquenchable thirst for profit drives the system. It always has and it always will as long as capitalism exists."

—From *Low-Wage Capitalism* p. 276



April 3-4 All out to Wall Street

Unemployment is up. Banks are stealing homes. Washington is throwing trillions at the bankers. And the wars keep feeding the military-industrial complex. It's past time to bring the demands of the working class directly to the heart of the U.S. ruling class: Wall Street. End U.S. wars of occupation. Use government funds to rescue workers instead of bankers.

On March 21 many anti-war activists marked the sixth anniversary of the criminal occupation of Iraq by demonstrating in Washington. There the ugly symbols of the capitalist state clog the landscape, from the presidential monuments to the Pentagon and the fortress-like offices of the privatized military in Arlington, Va.

On April 3 and 4, anti-war and other movements of workers and oppressed peoples will aim their anger at the New York Stock Exchange, AIG and the big banks and investment houses. That's one step closer to the class of billionaire owners that the state power in Washington serves.

The institutions of Wall Street, their management and their biggest owners are the wealthy recipients of the trillions in bailout money printed at the Treasury. They're the same ones who squeal in anguish if a family on welfare gets a free carton of milk. After profiting for decades from a system that concentrated wealth in their hands, those same hands are reaching for a giveaway from the government.

It's no surprise that they have awakened the righteous anger of workers, poor, and just about everyone else in the country who are not themselves millionaires or billionaires.

The Bail Out the People Movement's decision to call and mobilize for a march in the financial district hits the nail on the head. They will gather at 1 p.m. on April 3—a working Friday when the financial district will be packed—and again on the following day, April 4, the anniversary of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s assassination.

In a step forward for the struggle, the BOPM and the United for Peace and Justice coalition—which had been mobilizing for an April 4 march in the same area—have announced they will mutually support each other's actions. BOPM will have the main responsibility for April 3 and UFPJ for April 4. Each will help build and join both actions.

Through the initiative of BOPM and with an impulse from the agreement with UFPJ, those fighting the war machine are reaching out to the working class to mobilize the sector of society that has the power to confront the government and force an end to the military adventures abroad.

We call on all our readers to come to Wall Street on April 3, April 4 or both if possible. Add to this impulse. Help build a movement that can fight for workers' rights and bring the imperialist wars to a halt. □

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Demanding jobs, higher wages, price rollbacks

Three million French workers strike

By G. Dunkel

Workers in huge numbers took to the streets on March 19 in 219 cities and towns throughout France. The unions that called this one-day strike/protest counted more than 3 million workers who participated. Many small towns and cities, where protests are rare, saw record turnouts.

The protesters want the government to protect their jobs in the face of rising unemployment and outsourcing of manufacturing. They want the money now going to banks and financial institutions to go instead for a higher minimum wage. They want high prices for housing, transportation and energy rolled back. They want the government to start bargaining around these issues.

In Marseilles, the second-largest city in France, more than 300,000 people marched—a record. Paris had at least 350,000 demonstrators. In some towns in western France, more people protested than live in the towns, as workers came from miles around to express their anger.

An unusually large proportion of the strikers were from private companies and generally do not take part in strike days. Even IBM-France, Hewlett Packard and the payroll processing company EDS had worker contingents.

Substantial numbers of train drivers, dockworkers, postal workers, teachers, university professors and students, municipal employees, car makers, oil workers, supermarket cashiers and many other professions all walked out.

The Web site of the CGT—one of the leading French trade union confederations—had a number of reports about nonunion workers in very small companies filling out the legal forms required to exercise a French worker's constitutional right to strike.

This turnout showed a significant increase from the last one-day strike on Jan. 29. An opinion poll by BVA showed 74 percent of the French public supported this action.

The day of the protest, French president Nicolas Sarkozy went to Brussels for a meeting on the economy and avoided making any statements. François Fillon, the prime minister, stayed in Paris and stated, "I hear the protesters. Their concerns are legitimate." But, he added,

"Mobilizations will not resolve the crisis. The government has the duty to be responsible." (Le Monde, March 20) He rejected a new stimulus plan, saying, "We have doubled the deficit this year. We cannot go beyond that."

According to a statement of the New Anticapitalist Party (NPA), Fillon is the designated voice of neoliberal rejection of any change in France's economic policies. The head of MEDEF, France's big-business association, and the head of the UMP, Sarkozy's party, lead the charge while Fillon applies the final rejection.

The eight union confederations that called the strike met March 20 to plan for further actions but delayed any decision until another meeting, to be scheduled before the end of March. They want to conserve their impressive unity in the face of the government's attempt to split them, but realize that the government has no intention of opening up any discussions on the unions' social programs. There are also some significant contested elections for work councils, in which each union confederation runs a slate, coming up the last week of March, which will give a clearer idea about the mood of the workers and where they want to go.

May 1, a legal holiday in France, is likely under consideration for another day of action in the streets, according to some French journalists.

Olivier Besancenot, spokesperson for the NPA, responding to the question of what to do next and how to get the government to start negotiating, issued a call for an indefinite general strike, as was done in Guadeloupe.

Compared to the French Communist Party, the NPA is not a very large party on the French left. And both the CPF and the NPA are small compared to the major bourgeois parties. But Besancenot, according to a poll conducted by BVA, has as much French public opinion supporting him as supporting Sarkozy. Le Figaro, the leading conservative newspaper in France, published an interview with Besancenot March 16 in which he charged Sarkozy with having "a class-based policy," with "celebrating an outmoded entrepreneurial capitalism" and with taking an extravagantly expensive vacation in Mexico.

The struggle in France is intensifying. □

Rally denounces IDF shooting of Tristan Anderson

About 150 protesters rallied in front of the Israeli Consulate in San Francisco on March 16. They were demonstrating solidarity with Palestine and support for Tristan Anderson, a local union worker and longtime activist who was critically injured March 13 in the village of Ni'lin, close to Ramallah, Palestine.

Anderson was in the central West Bank city protesting the construction of the apartheid wall Israel is building through Ni'lin. Israeli military forces, armed and funded by the U.S., shot live ammunition at the protesters, hitting a local resident in the leg. They also shot high-velocity tear-gas canisters, one of which hit Anderson in the head. Anderson's grave head wound was made worse when Israeli Defense Forces delayed an ambulance trying to reach the injured.

Speaker after speaker at the March 16 protest stated that the Israeli military unleashes such violence against the Palestinian people every day. One pointed out that on March 16, 2003, another San Francisco area activist, Rachel Corrie, was run over by a bulldozer and killed during a similar demonstration of support for the Palestinians.

One person held a sign made from the inside top of a pizza box reading: "They thought he [Anderson] was a Palestinian, so they shot him in the head." As the crowd grew, they marched in the rain from the consulate onto the financial district streets, chanting, "Palestine will be free—from the river to the sea." Some of the marchers were arrested for causing an evening rush-hour traffic jam.

—Report and photo by Joan Marquardt



Global economic crisis and its impact on Africa

By **Abayomi Azikiwe**
Editor, Pan-African News Wire

Since the fall of 2008, with the decline in financial markets, the collapse of the housing industry in the United States, and the loss of millions of jobs and small businesses, the politicians in the Western capitalist states and Japan have sought to remedy the problem through measures aimed at bailing out the same banks and corporations that are responsible for the meltdown.

Trillions of taxpayer dollars have been handed over to Wall Street in a futile attempt to stave off the impending failure of the financial sector. The government has allowed millions of working families to be evicted from their homes and apartments while CEOs at AIG and other firms are allowed to collect billions in bonuses for their managerial incompetence and criminal activities.

With the situation reaching critical proportions in the U.S. and other industrialized states, the impact of the economic crisis is becoming more apparent in the so-called developing countries, particularly the African continent. Even though some Western analysts consider the African continent to be a marginal region, this area has been thoroughly integrated into the world capitalist system since the 19th century.

The raw materials and labor power of Africa have proven indispensable to the growth of the industrial regions of Western Europe and North America. Today, with the decline of commodity prices and wages for workers and farmers in Africa, the potential exists for a total economic collapse and the intensification of the class struggle.

World Bank predicts global downturn

One of the U.S.-based capitalist institutions that has been blamed for the failure of Africa to achieve genuine development in the post-colonial period since the 1960s is the World Bank. Formally known as the International Reconstruction and Development Bank, this agency was founded towards the conclusion of World War II in 1944 along with the International Monetary Fund. These two financial insti-

tutions grew out of the so-called Bretton Woods monetary system that sought to rebuild Europe and Asia in the image of U.S. economic interests.

However, by the 1970s, much of the focus of the World Bank and the IMF centered on lending to African and other Third World countries. The terms of these loans created major debt problems for many countries. During the 1980s, the World Bank and IMF set up Structural Adjustment Programs that imposed conditions on how these post-colonial states could conduct their domestic and foreign affairs. These conditions effectively arrested any genuine development efforts among the majority of peoples throughout the world.

A surprisingly harsh assessment of the state of the world capitalist system was issued early this March in the form of a report entitled "Swimming against the Tide: How Developing Countries Are Coping with the Global Crisis." The World Bank report sounds an alarm that the current decline in the capitalist economic system has the potential for creating a crisis not seen since the 1930s.

According to the World Bank report, "The economic crisis is projected to increase poverty by around 46 million people in 2009. The principal transmission channels will be via employment and wage effects as well as declining remittance flows."

The World Bank report also revealed: "Global industrial production declined by 20 percent in the fourth quarter of 2008, as high-income and developing country activity plunged by 23 and 15 percent, respectively. Gross Domestic Product will decline this year for the first time since World War II, with growth at least 5 percentage points below potential.

"World trade is on track to register its largest decline in 80 years, with the sharpest losses in East Asia, reflecting a combination of falling volumes, price declines and currency depreciation."

In late 2008, some analysts had predicted that the so-called subprime mortgage mess would not have a dramatic im-

pact on the economies of Africa. However, ideas to the contrary are gaining wider exposure in the African media.

In an article entitled "Report the 'Credit Crunch' from an African Perspective," published in the Botswana Sunday Standard on March 22, Rampholo Molefhe says, "The Africans initially believed that the continent would not be affected by the financial crisis at the Western banks, and the resulting collapse of the real estate sector there, because they were not in the direct line of influence of 'the economies' of the industrialized countries."

However, Molefhe points out, "Nothing could have been farther from the truth. Clearly, Barclays Bank in the African countries could not be disconnected from the mother company in Britain. Caterpillar, in Africa, is entirely indebted to its principals abroad for its operations, as is Kodak, Motorola, Sony and every other transnational on the continent."

Drawing a direct link between operations in Africa and the centers of capitalist decision-making, Molefhe states: "The continental operations of the multinationals give the appearance of good governance and effective administration because they run smaller operations with more effective oversight than their mother organizations in the north.

"More fundamentally, the prescriptions for the extent of the drive for profit are determined at the center, which controls them by remote control, so that waywardness in management is guarded by the strictest rules."

Capitalist reforms are not solutions

There is much anticipation surrounding the upcoming G-20 Summit in London scheduled for April 2. The leading capitalist countries and others from the nations of Asia, Latin America and South Africa will come together to discuss approaches to tackling the deepening economic crisis.

On its Web site, the organization states, "The G-20 is made up of the finance ministers and central bank governors of 19 countries: Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, France, Germany, India, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, Mexico, Russia, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, South Korea, Turkey, the United Kingdom and the United States of America, and also the European Union who is represented by the rotating Council presidency and the European Central Bank."

Even though the stated desire on the part of the summit is to address the economic crisis, the programs being put forward still preserve capitalist production methods and do not get at the root of the problem of overproduction, militarism and unequal terms of trade. Consequently, the summit will be a focal point for mass demonstrations in London.

The British Stop the War Coalition has called for protests outside the summit. In a statement, the Campaign says: "The G-20 will meet at a time of world slump, but they are spending more and more on war. Despite the disaster in Iraq and Afghanistan, the U.S. and Britain are sending thousands more troops to Afghanistan. They are spending more and more in Iraq. The total cost of the war will be around \$6 trillion."

These increased expenditures on war

by the imperialist states come at the same time that millions more workers will be thrown out of their jobs worldwide. Trade union leaders are predicting that the worsening financial contagion will result in the loss of another 50 million jobs this year.

Australian Council of Trade Unions President Sharan Burrow is leading an international trade union delegation to the G-20 summit in April calling for more effective and coordinated economic stimulus packages to bring about growth.

"You've got to look at where you can drive stimulus that will target employment growth, most efficiently, most speedily, and with a capacity to influence not just national economies, but indeed the global economy," she said.

Workers, oppressed must advance own program

On the African continent political unrest has been fueled by the economic crisis. In Mauritania last August, the military staged a coup against the existing government. In West Africa these same developments occurred in Guinea-Conakry in December and Guinea-Bissau in early March. Most recently, there was a coup in Madagascar, off the southeast coast of Africa in the Indian Ocean.

There have also been strikes and rebellions in Somalia, Kenya and South Africa over the last year. These actions are carried out in response to the rising cost of food and fuel and the decline in commodity prices and real wages.

All these states are heavily dependent on export earnings from raw materials sold to capitalist states in the West. However, the replacement of civilian governments with military ones will not solve the economic crises on the African continent. The advent of the military seizure of power in Africa during the immediate post-colonial period between the 1960s through the 1980s only worsened the crises of underdevelopment and imperialist domination.

At the same time, in the Western capitalist states, anger is brewing over the fallout from the economic crisis. In France, workers have engaged in one-day work stoppages and rebellions. In the U.S., workers and the oppressed formed a broad-based electoral alliance that brought the current Obama administration to power.

Yet the policies advocated by Obama in the U.S. and Sarkozy in France only reinforce capitalist production methods and regulatory measures. Any genuine reform or fundamental change must come from the self-organization of the workers and the oppressed within society. It is important at this juncture for workers and the oppressed to advance their own political and economic programs that are independent of the capitalist class and its political parties.

With the economic crisis becoming more pronounced in both the advanced capitalist states as well as the so-called developing countries, it provides greater opportunities for international solidarity and coordination of efforts.

Workers and oppressed communities in the U.S. must not only struggle to improve their own economic and social conditions, but they must also understand that the genuine liberation of the developing regions of the world is essential in creating the conditions for the real empowerment of the majority of the people in the industrialized countries. □



MUNDO OBRERO

Mientras el capitalismo se desmorona ¿Qué camino hay para- las fuerzas antiguerra?

Continúa de página 12

de la clase trabajadora en su programa, como el derecho a un empleo, pero también debe buscar la manera para demostrar la solidaridad concreta en la lucha. Para asegurar la solidaridad más amplia, es esencial incluir las demandas de los derechos de los trabajadores/as indocumentados al igual que las demandas en contra del racismo, la opresión nacional, la opresión sexual y de género, y todas las demás formas de opresión.

Sin duda alguna, la lucha contra la guerra debe ser continuada independientemente. Pero es necesario que tenga una perspectiva de clase trabajadora. La resistencia antiimperialista debe fusion-

arse con la solidaridad de la clase trabajadora internacional. Debe ser reconocido que los trabajadores/as y oprimidos del mundo están bajo ataque por los mismos patrones y banqueros que explotan y despiden obreros aquí en los EE.UU.

En última instancia, la lucha contra la guerra tiene que volverse en una lucha contra el capitalismo el cual engendra la guerra y la intervención en su búsqueda de ganancias, al igual que produce crisis y sufrimiento en la nación.

Reforzando la lucha de la clase trabajadora en contra del capitalismo es la manera más segura para ayudar a quitar el imperialismo de los EE.UU. de las espaldas de los pueblos del mundo. □

Mientras el capitalismo se desmorona ¿Qué camino hay para las fuerzas antiguerra?

Por Fred Goldstein

Como Washington está llevando a cabo guerras, ocupaciones e intervenciones en más frentes, el movimiento antiguerra es ahora más necesario que nunca. Se necesita para l@s trabajadores/as y oprimid@s en el exterior que son objetivos directos del Pentágono y además para las masas populares en Estados Unidos, quienes pagarán por estas operaciones militares y quienes tienen que llevarlas a cabo.

La lucha antiguerra se está desarrollando en medio de la crisis económica más severa en muchas generaciones. Esto crea una nueva situación para el movimiento y trae a la luz dos preguntas importantes: ¿Cuál debe ser el carácter del movimiento y cuál debe ser la relación de la lucha en contra de la guerra a la lucha en contra de la crisis económica?

Mientras millones de trabajador@s están perdiendo sus empleos y sus hogares y l@s trabajadores/as indocumentad@s sirven de chivo expiatorio y son atrapad@s en redadas, Washington está promoviendo la agresión en una forma u otra en Asia, el Medio Oriente, América Latina y África.

L@s trabajadores/as en Estados Unidos están bajo ataque porque el capitalismo estadounidense ha sido tomado por una crisis inevitable de sobreproducción, la cual es parte del sistema.

La gente oprimida en el exterior está bajo ataque porque el Pentágono está intentando asegurar los intereses de las gigantes compañías petroleras y las corporaciones transnacionales y los bancos con imperios globales desde Halliburton, Exxon y la GM, hasta Citigroup, JP Morgan Chase y AIG, la compañía de seguros más grande del mundo con operaciones en más de 100 países. Estas mismas corporaciones capitalistas están detrás de la crisis en el país.

Estos dos acontecimientos son inseparables: el colapso de las ganancias a nivel doméstico y la búsqueda de súper ganancias en el extranjero.

Sólo un pequeño resumen de los recientes eventos muestra la necesidad de un movimiento antiguerra con una perspectiva global.

Unas 17.000 tropas estadounidenses están programadas a viajar al frente en Afganistán en unas pocas semanas para continuar una guerra que fue iniciada en octubre del 2001 y no muestra señal de un final. La guerra recientemente se ha expandido hacia el noroeste de Pakistán, con naves tipo 'Predator' violando a voluntad el espacio aéreo de Pakistán y las Fuerzas Especiales de Estados Unidos cruzando la frontera.

La administración está retirando las tropas de Irak a paso lento y se ha comprometido a dejar una fuerza de ocupación de 50.000 tropas en el país para asegurar al régimen títere, su posición militar y los intereses de las compañías petroleras,

tanto en Irak como en la región.

A pesar de la diplomacia, las amenazas contra Iran continúan. Recientemente se reveló que las fuerzas de Estados Unidos derribaron un avión automático (sin piloto) iraní que volaba sobre el espacio aéreo de Irak en febrero, mostrando tanto la provocación contra Irán y la absoluta soberanía del ejército estadounidense sobre los titeres iraquíes.

Estados Unidos continúa el flujo de fondos y material militar a Israel para que continúe la brutal ocupación de Palestina. Esto incluye la continua expulsión de palestín@s para dar lugar a los asentamientos israelitas y a la agresión israelita contra Gaza.

Bajo la excusa de la llamada "guerra contra el terrorismo," Estados Unidos ha enviado 6.000 tropas para que dirijan a 2.500 tropas filipinas en unas operaciones en la región de Bicol al sur de Manila.

En Corea del sur, 26.000 tropas estadounidenses dirigen a 50.000 tropas coreanas en ejercicios militares llamados "Key Resolve" y "Foal Eagle" en toda Corea del sur desde el 9 hasta el 20 de marzo. En estos ejercicios toman parte el portaaviones nuclear USS John C. Stennis y siete naves destructoras Aegis con cargamento de misiles.

El 9 de marzo, el Pentágono envió una nave espía equipada con sonar anti submarino al espacio marino de China en el Mar del Sur Chino en una calculada provocación.

El Pentágono continúa la ayuda para los escuadrones de la muerte en Colombia; Washington está tratando de desestabilizar el gobierno de Hugo Chávez en Venezuela; está fomentando un movimiento separatista en contra del primer presidente indígena en América Latina, Evo Morales de Bolivia; y continúa el embargo en contra de la Cuba socialista.

En África, el Pentágono continúa hacia delante con sus planes de establecer un Comando Africano. Por ahora está centralizado en Stuttgart, Alemania, y las operaciones del Ejército y la Marina en Italia. Esto reafirma los esfuerzos de Estados Unidos de estrangular al gobierno nacionalista de Robert Mugabe en Zimbabwe por medio de sanciones y de socavar al régimen de Sudán.

El Pentágono ha matado a más de 1 millón de personas en Irak. Ha matado un sinnúmero de personas en Afganistán, incluyendo a civiles. El ejército estadounidense tiene un largo récord de guerras de conquista, comenzando con la destrucción de los pueblos indígenas, luego la toma de una gran parte de México y en 1898, la invasión de Cuba, Puerto Rico, y las Filipinas. Y docenas más han seguido.

El gobierno de Estados Unidos es el único gobierno que ha usado armas nucleares. El Pentágono es el arma internacional del mismo estado racista y represivo que tiene a 2,4 millones de personas en prisión, desproporcionadamente ne-

gras y latinas, y que usa la racista pena de muerte.

Más de un siglo de guerras e intervenciones no salen sólo de políticas malas. Las políticas salen de las necesidades de los gigantescos monopolios imperialistas que han expandido sus imperios empresariales hacia todo el globo terrestre con su deseo insaciable de mano de obra barata, materia bruta y ganancias.

La meta debe ser un movimiento de la clase trabajadora

Antes de la invasión de Irak en el 2003, las protestas antiguerra más grande en la historia de Estados Unidos fueron organizadas. Lo mismo se dio en Bretaña, España y en otros países Europeos. Pero estas protestas gigantescas fracasaron en detener la guerra, aún cuando estas protestas son algo indispensable en la oposición a la guerra imperialista y como una muestra necesaria de solidaridad.

Las protestas a veces pueden ser una fuerza disuasoria para los gobiernos capitalistas y son necesarias para crear la organización y la energía necesarias para avanzar hacia la etapa de resistencia.

Hay muchas formas de resistencia a las guerras imperialistas. Pero el carácter de clase de la sociedad capitalista define las formas definitivas de una resistencia efectiva.

Una crisis económica profunda y prolongada, tal como la está experimentando el mundo capitalista entero actualmente, tiene que producir un aumento de la resistencia entre la clase trabajadora. Una vez que la rebelión en contra de la explotación eche raíces entre la clase trabajadora, una vez que la conciencia de los antagonismos entre "ellos y nosotros" se difunda, se prepara el terreno para su rebelión contra ser utilizad@s para hacer posible una guerra de los explotadores, ya sea como trabajadores/as o como tropas.

La guerra de los Estados Unidos contra Vietnam ocurrió en la etapa de gran prosperidad imperialista, cuando l@s trabajadores/as como clase social estaban relativamente protegidos de los desastres de una crisis económica prolongada.

Ese periodo sin embargo, estuvo caracterizado por rebeliones en contra de la guerra y de la conscripción obligatoria entre la juventud, por la resistencia entre los soldados, y por levantamientos en contra del racismo, la represión policial y la pobreza en las comunidades africana-americana, latina e indígena. Pero l@s trabajadores/as como clase, como trabajadores/as del sector productivo, permanecieron alejad@s de la lucha.

Pero incluso durante esa guerra sin embargo, emergió el carácter crucial de los trabajadores como soldados. Fueron los trabajadores uniformados quienes finalmente obstruyeron la guerra en forma concreta al rebelarse contra la máquina militar, rehusando combatir, abandonando sus puestos masivamente y recurrien-

do al uso de la violencia en contra de sus oficiales militares. Incluso organizaron un sindicato antiguerra, el Sindicato de Soldados Americanos.

Hoy, la situación es muy distinta. No solamente hay una crisis en aumento para l@s soldad@s llamad@s a matar o a morir en el exterior, pero la clase trabajadora en sí se encuentra en una crisis creciente. Más de 20 millones de trabajadores/as están desemplead@s o subemplead@s. No hay un indicio de que van a parar los despidos. Millones de personas han perdido sus casas o pronto las perderán.

El ciclo vicioso detrás del bajón capitalista, donde los despidos conducen a la pobreza, que a su vez produce más despidos, es ahora transparente, no como en los años de 1960. El ejemplo del rescate de ricos banqueros mientras l@s trabajadores/as reciben escasas migajas de "estímulo", está claramente visible. La contradicción de la necesidad de cerrar fábricas, cadenas enteras de tiendas, quitar los alimentos de los mercados y forzar a millones de personas fuera de sus casas mientras que aparecen a través del país ciudades de tiendas de campaña con personas sin techo—en breve, la contradicción de la pobreza en medio de la abundancia—puede crear la oportunidad a la larga, de organizar a la clase trabajadora para luchar contra el sistema y sus guerras.

Ahora mismo \$534 mil millones han sido dedicados para el presupuesto militar, pero esto no incluye otros gastos relacionados a lo militar como por ejemplo las investigaciones para armas nucleares, los gastos para veteran@s, los intereses de las deudas de guerras e intervenciones pasadas, y las guerras en Irak y Afganistán. Si incluimos estos gastos el presupuesto de guerra llega a ¡un billón de dólares (mil miles de millones)! La lucha por los recursos para crear empleos está inseparablemente relacionada con la lucha contra la máquina militar.

Pero más allá de los gastos militares, la lucha para conducir a la clase trabajadora al movimiento antiguerra es la única forma de pasar de la protesta a la resistencia, hasta detener realmente las guerras y las intervenciones. Son l@s trabajadores quienes producen y transportan todo lo que hace posible la guerra. Ell@s como clase tienen el poder social de interferir con la guerra. Un ejemplo que ilustra este hecho es cuando el sindicato de estibadores (ILWU) cerró el sistema portuario de la costa oeste de los EEUU el Primero de Mayo del 2008 para protestar en contra de la guerra en Irak. Esta fue una huelga política. Mientras que una huelga de un solo día no puede detener la guerra, este ejemplo tiene un alto significado para el movimiento antiguerra.

El enfoque que asuma el movimiento antiguerra para dirigirse a l@s trabajadores/as no solo debe incluir demandas

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